CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A text entry system, comprising:

a display visually divided into at least two functional areas, a first of the functional areas corresponding to a first aspect of entering text, and a second of the functional areas corresponding to a second aspect of entering text;

an indicator system operable by one human digit, the indicator system having at least a first cardinal state, a second cardinal state and a third cardinal state, the third cardinal state having no textual meaning associated with it;

a processor responsive to each cardinal state, whereby the indicator system may be used to select options displayed in at least one of the functional areas;

a program controlling the processor so that text may be entered in response to a user selecting at least one of the options.

2. The text entry system of claim 1, wherein:

the first cardinal state is activated by applying a force to a first location;

the second cardinal state is activated by applying a force to a second location; and

the third cardinal state is activated by identifying a third location, the third location being located between the first location and the second location.

3. The text entry system of claim 2, wherein a fourth cardinal state is activated by activating the first cardinal state and the third cardinal state.

4. The text entry system of claim 2, wherein identifying the third location is accomplished by applying a force to the third location.

5. The text entry system of claim 1, wherein the text entry system has a first mode and a second mode, wherein;

when the text entry system is in the first mode, the first cardinal state has a textual meaning associated with it, and

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when the text entry system in the second mode, the first cardinal state has a different meaning associated with it.

6. The text entry system of claim 5, wherein the different meaning is a different textual meaning.

7. The text entry system of claim 5, wherein the different meaning is not a textual meaning.

8. The text entry system of claim 7, wherein the different meaning is a navigational meaning.

9. The text entry system of claim 5, wherein moving from the first mode to the second mode is accomplished by applying a force to the third location.

10. The text entry system of claim 5, wherein when the text entry system is in the first mode, the first cardinal state is used to select a first category of text and the second cardinal state is used to select a second category of text.

11. The text entry system of claim 1, wherein the first cardinal state is used to select a first category of text and the second cardinal state is used to select a second category of text.

12. The text entry system of claim 11, wherein the first cardinal state is used to select a first category of text and the second cardinal state is used to select a second category of text, wherein the first category of text includes symbols having a first feature and the second category of text includes symbols having a second feature.

13. The text entry system of claim 12, wherein a symbol having both the first feature and the second feature is included in both the first category and the second category.

14. The text entry system of claim 1, wherein the indicator system includes a position indicator and selection of one of the cardinal states is accomplished by detecting a position of the position indicator.

15. A method of entering text, comprising:

    providing a display having a first functional area and a second functional area;

    providing an indicator system operable by one human digit, the indicator system having a first cardinal state, a second cardinal state and a third cardinal state;

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providing a processor operably connected to the indicator system;

activating the first cardinal state to indicate to the processor selection of a first category of text to be entered, the first category including symbols used to create a plurality of text characters.

5   16. The method of claim 15, further comprising displaying a representative symbol, the representative symbol corresponding to the first category.

17. The method of claim 15, further comprising displaying in the first functional area a text character having one of the symbols corresponding to the first category.

18. The method of claim 17, further comprising:

10   activating the second cardinal state to indicate to the processor selection of a second category of text to be entered, the second category including symbols used to create a plurality of text characters; and

displaying in the first functional area a text character having one of the symbols corresponding to the first category and one of the symbols corresponding to the second

15   category.

19. The method of claim 17, further comprising selecting the text character displayed in the first functional area.

20. The method of claim 18, further comprising displaying the selected text character in the second functional area.

20   21. The method of claim 15, further comprising:

displaying in the first functional area a first icon that represents a text character which has one of the symbols corresponding to the first category; and

displaying in the first functional area a second icon that represents part of a text character, the first icon and the second icon having the same symbols.

25   22. A method of entering text, comprising:

providing a display having a first functional area and a second functional area;

providing an indicator system operable by a human eye, the indicator system having a first cardinal state, a second cardinal state and a third cardinal state;

providing a processor operably connected to the indicator system;

activating the first cardinal state to indicate to the processor selection of a first

5   category of text to be entered, the first category including symbols used to create a plurality of text characters.

23. The method of claim 22, further comprising displaying a representative symbol, the representative symbol corresponding to the first category.

24. The method of claim 22, further comprising displaying in the first functional area a text

10   character having one of the symbols corresponding to the first category.

25. The method of claim 24, further comprising:

activating the second cardinal state to indicate to the processor selection of a second category of text to be entered, the second category including symbols used to create a plurality of text characters; and

15   displaying in the first functional area a text character having one of the symbols corresponding to the first category and one of the symbols corresponding to the second category.

26. The method of claim 24, further comprising selecting the text character displayed in the first functional area.

20   27. The method of claim 26, further comprising displaying the selected text character in the second functional area.

28. The method of claim 22, further comprising:

displaying in the first functional area a first icon that represents a text character which has one of the symbols corresponding to the first category; and

25   displaying in the first functional area a second icon that represents part of a text character, the first icon and the second icon having the same symbols.

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